



**California Water Plan Update 2009**  
**REGIONAL TRIBAL WATER PLENARY MEETING #1**  
*Greater Kern, Kings, Tule, and South Central Valley Waters*  
Wednesday, March 4, 2009, 9 AM to 4:30 PM



**An Overview of the Tribal Communication Plan**

**1. Origin**

- Recommendation 13 of the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) California Water Plan Update 2005 called for increasing Tribal involvement in statewide, regional, and local water planning.
- In June 2007, DWR convened a Tribal Communication Committee (TCC) to advise the Department on outreach to and communication with California Native American Tribes for the California Water Plan Update 2009 process. The TCC began to meet monthly in October, 2007.
- In the summer of 2008, the TCC released a Tribal Communication Plan (Plan) for DWR and all interested State agencies in the summer of 2008. This groundbreaking document marked a major milestone in the history of California water planning.
- DWR sent copies of the Plan to all California Native American Tribes in July 2008. Shortly thereafter, the 21 member agencies of the California Water Plan Update's State Agency Steering Committee were briefed on the Plan.

**2. Contents**

The purpose of the plan is to help DWR and other State and federal agencies involved in the California Water Plan Update 2009 to communicate appropriately and effectively with all California Native American Tribes. More specifically, it aims to promote and increase Tribal participation in the current and all future Water Plan Update processes, in order to ensure the description and inclusion, protection, and advancement of Tribal water and culturally-related needs and rights.

The Plan recognizes that California Native American Tribes live in different places and have different relations with water resources. It respects and values this diversity. At the same time, it intentionally includes all the indigenous people of California and addresses them equally. In this way, it aims to provide a foundation for California Native American Tribes to come together to promote their water concerns and needs for the future as one people, from the north to the south.

Among other elements, the Plan includes

- specific target audiences
- a series of six goals (listed below)
- a series of ten objectives and 17 guiding principles, including respecting and learning about California Native American Tribes, and connecting to community issues, needs, and values
- 22 targeted actions with specific venues and timelines, including regular information sharing, and Tribal participation in and review of all Water Plan Update 2009 documents
- a "network" of 16 major statewide Tribal organizations and Tribal-related State and federal agencies, and
- processes for dispute resolution and evaluation

### 3. Goals of the Tribal Communication Plan

- 1) State agencies, local governments and water purveyors that deal with water resources acknowledge the indigenous and aboriginal rights of California Native American Tribes and their water rights, so that Tribes can safely continue their cultural and religious practices in perpetuity. (Safety in this context refers to the public health aspects of cultural and religious practices, for example, the ability to eat fish that are not contaminated with mercury and other toxins. A water purveyor is a public utility, mutual water company, county water district, or municipality that delivers drinking water to customers, including both wholesalers and retailers.)
- 2) State agencies, local governments, and water purveyors acknowledge that California Native American Tribes are a viable people comprising government or representative entities with viable concerns and solutions, and listened to as individuals and negotiated with on a government-to-government basis.
- 3) California Native American Tribes identify likely impacts and effects on interests and cultural resources from water planning and management decisions or projects in advance of decision-making, and have adequate time to review associated proposals.
- 4) California Native American Tribes bring their authentic and diverse voices, including traditional knowledge, into the CWP Update 2009 process, and into other State planning processes that involve water resources.
- 5) In 2009, a California Tribal Water Summit that includes the highest level of decision-makers from State, local, and federal governments, and water purveyors, is held.
- 6) California Native American Tribes from northern and central California begin to work together to protect their watersheds for habitat, water quality, water supply, and traditional cultural places, and develop ways of conveying water to assist Tribes in southern California.

### 4. Where to Download the Tribal Communication Plan

To download a copy of the working draft Tribal Communication Plan and the Cover Letter from DWR Deputy Director Mark W. Cowin, go to the Tribal Communication Committee webpage: <http://www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/tribal2/>

Here you can also find information about

- The 2009 California Tribal Water Summit, including the Regional Tribal Water Plenary Meetings and the monthly Planning Team meetings
- Grants and training information
- Highlights from the 2007-2008 meetings of the Tribal Communication Committee
- Related reference material